

**Marion Road Trunk Sanitary Sewer Project
Alternative Urban Areawide Review
Field Review (8/29/01)**

**Summary of Tour Worksheet Notes and Observations
Made by Technical Advisory Committee Members**

Stop1	Traffic count information given for intersections at Marion Rd./TH 14 and Marion Rd./Eastwood Rd.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marion Road sees 17,000 vehicles per day and TH 14 has 24,000 vehicles per day. • Congestion created by closely spaced intersections and driveways will need to be addressed. • Future traffic growth will likely cause traffic problems to worsen. • If there was an alternative access for Eastwood Rd traffic to TH 14 it might mitigate some of future potential problems. • Need to increase capacity of Eastwood Road. • DOT's threshold of 'problem' is far higher than mine. My experience is that the wait times and congestion are bad enough now to warrant improvements (e.g. 2nd lane southbound from 15th Ave. to County 36). • A site with a remnant prairie parcel was pointed out along Eastwood Road in an area already platted for development. (NOTE: the detailed natural resources inventory data for this area was developed as a pilot project by the Rochester Committee on Urban Design and Environment.) • Marion Road and Hwy 14 intersection is ok. I have not seen many accidents here over the years. • The Marion Road/Eastwood Road intersection has problems for traffic turning left. Should be right turn only. • With the current development the Eastwood Road/Marion Road intersection is bad. With most traffic opting to enter Hwy. 14 next to McMurphy's, extending East Circle Drive (County 22) to Eastwood Road would bleed off anticipated increases in traffic from the new Schmidt subdivision (located west of Eastwood Golf Course). • Not acceptable now and you're adding another gas station. Plus the added vehicular traffic during the Highway 52 expansion.
Stop 2	Valley Side Estates Subdivision; adjacent to large tracts of undeveloped land to the south; potential 40th Ave. extension to south
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This subdivision operates a private lift station and force main that connects to the City's sewer collection system near 40th Avenue. In the future, this subdivision could alternatively be served by a Marion Trunk sewer extension that continues east from 20th St. along Bear Creek and then up the valley that meets this subdivision. • Not all open space areas need to be preserved for active recreation. Parkland dedication criteria should allow for non-recreational green space, particularly when there is a willing developer. Can the public participate or partner with interested parties on approaches like land trusts? • Will the private lift station actually serve a larger area or is it sized only for this development? • Should consider street system extensions to south or east in order to accommodate future development potential (particularly along south side of development). • Clear example of bulldozing everything flat to make housing, which is BAD. • Motivation for Rochester city to extend its 20th St SE trunk line (the lift station is expensive to maintain??), but the city is quiet on this point (saying only that extension will be "developer motivated"). Disclosure of agreements that would motivate extension would help city/township communication by reducing suspicion & rumor. • Are Phase II homes being built? Will there be connections to the AUAR project sewers? Private lift station but public sewer collection. Developer owns the lift station but it goes to a lift station outside the planning area (to the north?). Are there ordinance requirements for the storm water pond or is the pond part of the construction storm water permit? • This subdivision overlooks a very beautiful valley.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity to set aside a 2-3 acre woods/meadow just east of Valley Side. This AUAR process should help develop mechanisms for doing this. • Another piece of wooded land that will fall to development and become City. • The 40th Avenue extension is a must and should be three lanes wide, with a traffic signal at the Hwy 14 junction and a 4-way stop at 20th St. • The developer should be asking for sewer extension, not the City. Was the developer promised gravity flow before the land for gravity flow was annexed?
Drive 3	Traffic Count intersection at TH 14 / 40th Ave. SE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development north of TH 14 is being designed to also utilize this intersection. The idea is to focus traffic-shed movement to this location in order to take advantage of future signalization and minimize the need to signalize other locations. • Profile of 40th Ave planned for change in order to improve sight distance. Also may need to widen the intersection approach to TH 14. This will result in some cross section changes that may affect driveway grades and change ditch/drainage profiles somewhat. • Again, my perception of the load on this thoroughfare is that it's closer to capacity than DOT describes. • This intersection could be a problem as 40th Avenue is extended and traffic increases. • This intersection will be a problem sooner rather than later. • Increased traffic will cause problems for left turning vehicles. • A traffic signal is needed at least during peak traffic hours. • If lights are not installed, the added traffic will come east and try to enter Marion Rd. or south through Rose Harbor and be adding traffic onto Marion Road by Marvale.
Drive 4	Recorded cultural resource site (Trapp mounds unconfirmed)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a site that potentially contains burial mounds, but the information is sketchy and has not been verified. • Developers of land to the south (Phase II of Valley Side Estates) were looking for future access to TH 14 through this area. • Long term upgrading of TH 14 is planned to expand to four lanes from end of current four lane to Eyota. • A likely location for a bike trail to connect the residential area along CSAH 11 to the city trail system at Eastwood Park is on the south side of the highway. • Must protect cultural resources; they are not renewable. • Should do the necessary "homework" to verify. If we don't, it's another "cart before the horse" priority inversion that we should avoid. • Leave it alone. • I grew up in the Trapp neighborhood and can remember hearing of the burial mounds. Way back, there was a road along the tree line (as viewed from Hwy 14). I think the mounds were in the hills behind the woods. • This area seems like a level (?) portion of land with a wetland problem.
Stop 5	New Country Meadows Subdivision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a particular issue with this subdivision in particular or even in the study area, but the County Sheriff has pointed out how the spread and development of suburban subdivision areas has caused concerns in terms of their ability to provide expected service to residents. As development spreads further out and more suburban area is developed the resources of that agency are stretched over greater populace, resulting in less service. • Sandy soils support Blanding's Turtle. • Example of a larger-lot suburban development using cluster type development so that each buildable lot can be less than two acres. How are the septic requirements met on the lots that are less than two acres? Do they have a community drainfield? • Some nice examples of homes built without disturbing surrounding ecology. • Some clear examples of excessive clearing near Bear Creek. • Part of the environmental impact should be to consider the effect of new development on current residents ... too often the developer and government focus solely on the new (yet to arrive)

	<p>residents, ignoring current residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there the possibility of cluster development concepts (i.e., common green spaces) with City development? • Smaller lots (1-2 acres) with common area to meet the average 2.5-acre minimum lot size. • Good use of that piece of land. • There also used to be a large population of beavers in both branches of Bear Creek. • This type of subdivision fit very nicely with all the large lot development surrounding the area.
Drive 6	Bear Creek Crossing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we or do we need to plan for the transition from a rural to an urban floodplain system? • Possible matter of how trail system from Chester Woods along Bear Creek east of CSAH 11 is then continued westward to tie into the City trail system at Eastwood Park or Marion Road. • County bridge replacement scheduled for 2001 (?). • Galena limestone is highly fractured while the Decorah shale is unfractured. • A 500' riparian zone exists on each side of the creek; sandy soils are good Blanding's Turtle habitat. • Assume this area will continue to be appropriately protected as a wetland/riparian area under current procedures. • Leave it natural. • Low areas east and west are prone to flooding in heavy rains; large watershed. • This corridor also has wetland problems; just to serve large lot development doesn't make sense.
Drive7	Older larger lot Timber Ridge Subdivision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an older, large-lot suburban style development. • This are contains the Decorah Shale edge that involves the hillside recharge effect supplying about 50% of Rochester's drinking water. • Must protect recharge areas not only from septic systems (these controls seem to be in place), but also erosion and chemical (pesticide, fertilizer) runoff. This should further limit development in hillside areas. • Basement (?) water problems. • Nice homes, but a lot of land taken up for the number of houses. • I think all these homes have good ISTS's that are working very well. • The Decorah shale may be an issue for some wet basements. I don't see any problem for septic expansion or repair. Lots are big enough for expansion and performance standards for septsics.
Stop 8	New development proposal would occur adjacent to the existing large lot development pattern; Decorah shale edge present
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we know how to deal with the Decorah shale edge problem? Should we look at special district-type regulations for addressing this issue? • Shallow depth to bedrock. • High perched water table in basements due to Decorah Shale. • Interim development (? , went in as large-lot development according to the County land-use plan), adjacent development would be interim, higher density - risk of Decorah edge. • Many seeps/springs observed, running through end of July 2001. • Note: Add ~4 in NW1/4 of section 22 around the bowl, add 2 at the jct. of Arlington & Highland Ridge - one on each side • Surface water runs through adjacent neighborhoods, adds somewhat to flooding problems. • Stream connects to wildlife reserve area immediately west across Cty11. • Wildlife observed: deer, red-tail hawk (adults & juveniles), peregrine falcon, lots of song birds. • Potential old-growth oak on NW1/4 Section 22 (north of Highland Ridge). • Cultural: existing horse farms in NW1/4 S22 would be severely impacted by development around them. • Many deer cross in this area; there is water seeping out in many areas. Not a good development area. • This originally would have been a large lot subdivision, however, it was blocked by Richard Freese. Schmidt and Mike Nigbur countered with a city lot style development and a change from

	<p>50-year Urban Reserve to 25-year Urban Service Area. The Town Board and township residents oppose this change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both Highland Ridge and Timber Ridge are built around Decorah shale. I'd like large lot development here as well.
Drive 9	Marion Town Hall
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Original Site –historic site designation as a recorded Historical Site. Originally, this building was a school house. Again, need to protect this type of site; how to do so with effective aesthetics? Regulation alone may well lead to "ugly preservation". The last stand! This building, while historic, does not serve the Township very well. There are no bathrooms, water, or air conditioning and has only a space heater that is quite old.
Drive 10	Older Oak Park Subdivision; small lot development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small-lot, suburban development; recent mound system septic rehabilitation (\$5k - \$10k). I think our goal should be to preserve these neighborhoods as cultural resources. This would require us to find ways to address potential groundwater contamination from old septic systems without large-scale demolition or large costs which would uproot current residents. All ok. Even with the small lot size, these home owners can replace their in-ground ISTS's with a mound system over the older system. Here again the lots are big enough for future septic systems; replacement issues are not a problem through Minnesota Statutes 7080.
Drive 11	Early 20th Century Homewood Addition (bypassed due to time limitations)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creek bottom, sensitive to surface runoff. Established neighborhood, with potential cultural & historical significance. Most of these houses were built in the 70's and early 80's. Sandy ground; good use of this area. Typical of older development, in low-lying areas with a high water table. Performance standards through MPCA are doing quite well here to solve septic replacement.
Drive 12	Undeveloped land to west; proposed 2002 sewer extension
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to map floodplain and other constraints prior to development of land use scenario in order to understand development potential of the area south of 30th St, since with sewer available developers are likely to pay for extension in land that can be developed. Sewer permits are in place; some easements are still needed. The timing between obtaining easements and permits may not coincide, but there is no time limitation on the permit once it is issued. Caution for surface runoff contamination from construction and residential development. How much of this area is wetlands? Seems like plenty in the Badger Run 'bottoms'. Here comes the City. Badger Run makes development and infrastructure a problem for full use. Extension of 40th Avenue to Hwy. 52 should be considered (complete East Circle Drive?). I don't believe it's fair to existing home owners who live in the country on 2-5 acre lots to have their land devalued by small lot development.
Drive 13	Marion Road
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to determine whether future extension of four-lane section is needed south of the bridge. Mix of commercial, old neighborhoods, new neighborhoods. Marion Road expansion may be needed to handle traffic; won't this overload Marion near TH14? Need to be careful to not destroy the 'heritage' (see #9-#11) to serve present needs. Will need a lot of improvement when development takes place. Marion Road should be expanded to 5 lanes to 40th Avenue at least. This intersection was poorly built when Marion Road was expanded. Something needs to be done here before the Hwy. 52 expansion.
Drive 14	Circa WWII era Marvale Subdivision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a significant neighborhood of affordable housing, are there things to consider to maintain the

	<p>level of quality? Obviously sewer and water and street reconstruction were important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood Park development is scheduled in the next year or so for this area. • This subdivision had City sewer and water available last fall for hook-ups; approximately 123 homes in this subdivision can be hooked up and about half are already connected. • This subdivision was obviously built because the scenery & location are beautiful, out of town, yet town is accessible. Such a feeling is a valuable cultural resource that we should be careful to not destroy. Let's cultivate that feeling when we develop, and be careful to not destroy existing pleasant living areas. • Sewer should enhance the value of these properties. It may be important to provide some additional assistance/encouragement to ensure that the homes continue to be maintained and improved. Neighborhoods like this are alternatives to construction for first time home-buyers. • Close houses, low-lying area with a high water table; City sewer and water will help, but people will still have water problems. • My issue here is how poorly silt and run-off was handled during the extension of sewer and water. Look at the mess caused downstream. No erosion control plan here!
Stop 15	Tourist cabins; commercial strip along Marion Road
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great pancakes! • Are there any potential historic preservation options for the cabins given their history? They have historic value. • Application of access management strategies along Marion Road as property redevelops or undergoes change of use should be explored. • Why wait for the time of imminent development before assessing the historical significance/value? Let's do it now. • Marion Road is the major traffic artery and will/may evolve into the major commercial area for the area. • Time will change this. • With all the new homes, I think more service areas need to be considered on the major routes: Marion Road, 20th St, 40th Ave., etc. • This area here will have a big impact on Helen. She barely makes ends meet now. Financially and environmentally, this area has much wetlands. Large lots I don't see a need here. If septic is an issue the resident can't afford an extension!
Drive 16	Potential 40th Ave extension; undeveloped areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be issues related to what happens south of 20th St. if 40th Ave. (?) is extended to TH 14. • There are property access needs north of 20th St. that may need to be considered along with 40th Ave. extension issues. • The obvious environmental impacts of a road extension need to be evaluated. • Are there any proposed industrial developments? If so, will they be wet or dry industries? This will impact wastewater capacities (on the sewer and the treatment plant). • Site of future road extension has difficult topography. • More creek/riparian area that needs to be protected. • General plan for the area should create connected natural corridors (DNR suggestion) that leave the hilltop oak savannas and riparian zones natural with minimal intrusion. This would create natural buffers between developments, adding to the feeling of quiet seclusion. • How do we motivate developers to *not* use the bulldoze & drain approach? Instead, we should work with the creek and the existing environment (that's what it will naturally tend back to, anyway!) in a low-impact approach. We deride clear-cutting forests and slash & burn agriculture, why do we tolerate "clear cutting" development? • Large impact area. • The Bear Creek corridor is a critical greenway as Rochester expands east. Plans for maintaining this corridor as green space are critical to this project. A bike trail connection to Chester Woods Park should also be addressed. • If this area is developed, the 40th Ave. extension seems logical. But then you have to deal with the 40th Ave./Highway 14 intersection. • A 4-way stop or stop at 20th St. will be needed if 40th Avenue becomes East Circle Drive.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension only by developer, not City. 	
Drive 17	Undeveloped area to north, Sandy Slopes Subdivison
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible issues with adequacy of 19th St. given its narrow width. • Sandy Slopes is an existing development with a community water supply now operated by Rochester Public Utilities. • Noted several cases of natural buffers between developments along 60th Ave., need more like this! • Here comes the City. • Low marshy areas along both branches of Bear Creek. No agricultural use for as long as I can remember (my childhood neighborhood). • Again, large lots surrounding this area; small lots would not only have impact on traffic, but also lose value. 	

General Notes

- Evaluate development impact issues, particularly the likelihood of substantial land alterations and need for pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout the area as development intensifies traffic on streets. Problem of a township level street system ultimately serving what will become a city type level of development (currently no sidewalks in most neighborhoods).
- As area intensifies in terms of development, the implications of the elementary school service area will probably become more important. With an enlarged boundary for those who are not provided bus service, there will be a question of providing safe routes to school as a potential issue.
- A number of roadways will require wider rights-of-way in order to be upgraded to adequate facility standards given likely projected traffic. This includes streets like Eastwood Road, 20th St., and possibly CSAH 11.
- There are neighborhood park needs in existing development areas, particularly in areas with smaller lots.
- Will there be a need for an Emergency Response facility (Fire Station) at some point in the future?
- Should the development of a linear open space/environmental corridor system be considered along Bear Creek/Badger Run, within the Phase I area in particular?
- Possible need to consider special overlay zoning requirements to manage infill development in the area.
- The AUAR is updated every five years, at a minimum. Modifications/amendments would be published in the EQB Monitor.
- This area is already significantly developed, hence the environment has already been 'disturbed'.
- Any plan to protect remaining natural resources would have to overcome the "It's already disturbed" argument.
- Add restoration (wetlands, green space/buffers) to the plan to offset the dissent.
- We need to clarify the enforcement aspect of the AUAR.
- Residents are now part of the environment. They & their neighborhoods should get some consideration for 'protection' like any other resource.
- How do we add aesthetic value? Development without care for overall appearance doesn't benefit the city/county/township.
- Should development and infrastructure needs outside and adjacent to the project area boundaries be considered?
- Will development outside the project boundary area be allowed to connect to water/sewer (non-emergency)?
- Nice rolling land – well forested – many geologic formations – spaced with homes on large and small lot development (new and old).
- Area is pleasant from a residential perspective, although development costs may be high due to the nature of the land and the need to mitigate, including street systems that are marginally adequate.

- The sewer system is believed to drive further development within this area that will need to be planned for. Careful study will be needed and cooperation between government jurisdictions is critical.

SWCD Notes:

- 1) Erosion Control:
 - Silt fences and erosion control materials need to be installed appropriately and maintained during development projects.
 - Re-vegetation plans should be undertaken in graded areas to prevent erosion & sediment movement, as well as to enhance the current vegetative type and control aggressive, noxious vegetative types.
- 2) Water Quality:
 - Storm water ponds/sediment basins will need to be constructed to handle increased surface water flow due to future development in conjunction with sewer expansion.
 - Storm water must be treated before it is released into wetlands.
 - Stream crossings should be planned to minimize impacts to stream banks & vegetation with sediment control protection installed. Re-vegetation of critical areas should be done to enhance the vegetation and control aggressive vegetation.
- 3) Wetland Protection (Wetland Conservation Act):
 - Avoidance, Minimization and Replacement of impacted wetlands.
 - Proper sequencing of proposed wetland impacts must be made available for review & comment.
 - Enhancement of wetlands through desirable species planting.
- 4) Protection of Unique Resources:
 - Special consideration should be given to protection of unique natural areas such as:
 - the hillside seep areas which often include wetlands,
 - woodlands including oak savanna areas,
 - natural prairie areas,
 - riparian corridors, and
 - avoiding undue fragmentation and disturbance of wildlife areas.

DNR Notes:

- Are all of the necessary players at the table? County and MnDOT projects may have a bearing on development patterns within the AUAR area.
- The riparian corridors along Badger Run and Bear Creek are key environmental areas that should be preserved, and perhaps enhanced. Trying to maintain some connectedness between remaining natural areas is very important. A unique part of the AUAR process is that it requires a mitigation plan for impacts identified through the review process. Enhancement of degraded natural areas within the AUAR area would be a great mitigative measure.
- The natural areas adjacent to the AUAR area, such as Chester Woods, Eastwood Golf Course, etc., should also be reviewed in planning natural areas and connections.
- Will only development be allowed that will be connected to the city sewer? A few developments have been proposed that have used group septic systems that are to be managed by People's Cooperative. Would these be acceptable in this area and would that not ultimately change the numbers of houses that can ultimately be sited in the area?